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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2009

In Today's Papers

Congressman Moran: "Turkey Was Right Regarding The Iraq War"
Turkey's semi-official Anatolian News Agency (AA) reports U.S. Congressman Jim Moran extended support to Turkey's EU membership, and said "Turkey should become a full member of the EU." Moran said at a meeting at a [Fettullah Gulen-community backed] Rumi Forum gathering in Washington D.C. that Turkey should be able to pursue full EU membership (and not a privileged partnership which has been proposed by some circles). He said it was not a coincidence that Turkey was one of the first countries visited by Barack Obama after he was sworn in as the president, and added Turkey had always played a central role geo-politically throughout the civilizations. Moran said the U.S. made "terrible mistakes" during the war of Iraq. He noted that 80 percent of Turkish people objected to the use of Turkish territories by the U.S. in that war, and stressed "Turkish people were right" while "the U.S. administration in that period was wrong." Mainstream Milliyet quotes Moran in the headline, "Turkey Was Right (Regarding) The Iraq War."

Turkey Will Re-Export Iranian Gas to Europe Under Nabucco (Aksam)
Mainstream Aksam, citing unnamed Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) sources, reports that the EU and Turkey want to include Iranian gas into the Nabucco Pipeline Project in a way that will not offend the U.S. According to the plan, part of the natural gas Turkey purchases from Iran will be re-exported by Turkey via the Nabucco pipeline, thus making Turkey, instead of Iran, the seller of gas to Europe. It is estimated that if the U.S. police toward Iran "softens" until 2014, the U.S. will not object to the plan. However, this formula is not expected to work if Iran makes no changes regarding its nuclear program, says Aksam.

Turkish and Greek Militaries Will Discuss Aegean Problems at NATO's Izmir HQ (Cumhuriyet)
Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet cites Greek press reports that, through initiatives from the U.S., military delegations from Turkey and Greece will discuss on July 21-22 their 'Aegean problems' within the frame of 'confidence-building measures' at talks at the NATO Headquarters in Izmir. The outcome of the talks between two militaries on "airspace problems" as well as the prevention of "human trafficking" will be conveyed to the foreign ministries of

both countries, reports Cumhuriyet.

Erdogan Holds 'Terror Summit,' Cicek Lashes Out At Yargitay Chair
Media outlets report Prime Minister Erdogan held Wednesday a meeting with five of his cabinet ministers to discuss "terror and security," Government Spokesman Cemil Cicek told the press after the gathering.

Deputy PMs Cemil Cicek, Ali Babacan, FM Ahmet Davutoglu, Justice Minister Sadullah Ergin and Interior Minister Besir Atalay participated in the meeting.

In response to the High Court of Appeals (Yargitay) Chairman Hasan Gerceker's remarks that civilian trials of military personnel are "against the Constitution," Cicek said the Constitutional Court, not the High Court of Appeals, decides whether a law violates the Constitution. Cicek also stressed that Yargitay itself should not interfere in the judicial process.

Turkey Aligns With The Non-Aligned (Zaman)

Islamist-oriented Zaman reports that President Abdullah Gul, for the first time, is representing Turkey at the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit talks in Egypt's Sharm el-Sheikh. Gul said in a statement to the press that such meetings were important opportunities for meeting with several NAM countries.

Editorial on President Gul Attending the Non-Aligned Summit in Egypt

Erdal Safak wrote in mainstream Sabah: "For the first time ever, a Turkish president has attended a summit of the Non-Aligned Countries. Gul's participation in this summit demonstrates Turkey's

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success in pursuing a multi-faceted foreign policy. Not only have the international circumstances changed, but Turkey's internal dynamics have changed in order to create a positive atmosphere for the highest level representation. Turkey's President Gul received praise from the non-aligned members for the government's approach to international matters."

The EU's 'Visa Unfairness' Intensifies against Bosnians, Turks (Cumhuriyet)

Media outlets report that on Wednesday, the European Commission proposed allowing the citizens of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia travel to EU countries without visas as of January 1, 2010. Citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina, however, have been excluded from the new arrangement because they still don't have 'new passports' containing microchips with biometrics data. On Wednesday, EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn declined press questions regarding the EU's visa-free travel regime implementation for Turkish citizens. Cumhuriyet says despite a visa-free travel regime agreement between the EU and Turkey, the EU Commission's decision to leave the Turks out of the equation raise questions in the Turkish people's minds regarding the EU. Islamist-oriented Zaman comments, "The EU leaves Muslim Bosnians in the cold, again."

Coverage of Secretary Clinton's Speech

Secretary Clinton's speech last night occurred later than print media could report it, but TVs do highlight aspects of the speech involving Turkey and Iran. Mainstream CNN Turk reports, "Clinton Dubs Turkey A Rising Power," as "during her speech outlining a new approach to foreign policy, Secretary counted Turkey among the rising powers," in the world. Meanwhile, NTV notes, "Clinton emphasized during her speech that when it comes to Iran, America's door will not always remain open."

Israeli Soldiers Confess to War Crimes in Gaza

Media feature sensationalist articles regarding reports that some Israeli soldiers have confessed to using Palestinians as human shields and attacking civilians during their operations in Gaza earlier this year. In "Frightening Confessions," mainstream Milliyet reports, "Israeli soldiers have admitted to being ordered to 'strike first, think later.'" Liberal Radikal headlines, "Israeli Soldiers Tell Of War Crimes in Gaza" and the article notes "Israeli soldiers have confessed to using Palestinians as human shields." Mainstream Hurriyet headlines, "We Burned Them Like Ants," while Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak headlines, "We Killed Gazans Like

Ants."

Designer Miyake Invites Obama to Hiroshima

Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports internationally renowned Japanese fashion designer Issey Miyake has invited President Obama to Hiroshima on the 64th anniversary of the WWII-era bombing campaign against the city. In an own op-ed in The International Herald Tribune (IHT), Miyake said such a visit paid by Obama would have a "symbolic" meaning regarding the struggle against nuclear bombs. No U.S. President has officially visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the two Japanese cities were bombed toward the end of WWII, says Cumhuriyet.

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) Spokesman Burak Ozugergin said "Turkey and China do not need to exchange any messages via the media," over Chinese media reports criticizing PM Erdogan for his claims alleging "genocide" against ethnic Uighurs.

- Floods in the Black Sea provinces of Ordu and Artvin kill four; three other people went missing.

- Higher Education Board (YOK) President Yusuf Ziya Ozcan says university entrance exam system will be reformed, granting easier

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access to the graduates of Islamic cleric-training schools (Imam-Hatip) and vocational high schools.

- On July 20, Deputy PM Cemil Cicek will go to Turkish Cyprus to attend 'Peace and Freedom Day' celebrations.

- JP-Morgan analysts warn the probability of Turkey striking an imminent loan deal with the IMF was "low".

World

- A bill submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives offers to mark the Turkish National Day on October 29.

- An Iranian passenger jet from Tehran to Yerevan crashed after takeoff, killing all 168 passengers and crew aboard. Tehran blamed the international sanctions which block Iran from getting spare parts as well as maintenance from international experts.

- Secretary Clinton said the U.S. will still pursue direct talks with Iran to persuade the country's leaders to abandon a possible nuclear-arms program.

- Northern Iraq prepares to hold July 25 regional elections for its parliament.

- Joost Lagendijk, the head of Turkey-EU joint parliamentary group, has been replaced by French MEP Helen Flautre.

JEFFREY